Type of Vehicles	Production
Multi-Utility Vehicles	1,34,613
Two Wheelers'	30,72,667
Three Wheelers	2,34,867
TOTAL:	40,04,147

(d) No, Sir.

(e) No, Sir.

Loss in HMT

1252. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that HMT watch Division is losing heavily;

(b) what is the total cumulative loss incurred by the Watch Division; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to review the watch factory?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The cumulative loss incurred by the Watch Division is Rs. 21 Crores.

(c) The performance of HMT is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Government.

Policy formulation for wood based industries

1253. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:
DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO:
DR. MOHAN BABU:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new policy has been formulated/proposed to be laid down in the forest areas for wood based industries after the enactment of Forest Protection Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to develop wood based industries?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) No new policy has been formulated in the forest areas for wood-based industries.

(c) Vide Press Note No. 11(1997 series) issued on 17th July, 1997 by the Ministry of Industry, plywood, veneers of all types and other wood based products such as particle board, medium density fibre board/block board have since been de-licensed subject to locational conditions, and relevant statutes/statutory/policy notifications such as the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972, National Forest Policy and directions and decisions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

Industrial Mishaps

1254. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that quite a large number of Industries have experienced blast and industrial mishap during last three years;

(b) whether Government have collected reports on such blasts or mishaps;

(c) whether it is a fact that no specifications on construction, storage, pipelines, reactors have been evolved by his Ministry; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that Industrial inspectors have not been rigidly implementing safety measures?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Production of Salt in Thane

1255. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total quantum of salt produced in the district of Thane;

(b) what are the number of people employed in this industry;

(c) whether it is a fact that the labour on salt plants will be rendered jobless due to the new Government's policy on salt manufacturing;

(d) whether it is a fact that unhappy labour have demonstrated at the office of Inspector Salt at Bhainder in Thane district; and

(e) whether Government will permit continuance of operations, through the **traditional salt pan labour?**

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) The total quantum of salt produced in the district of Thane in Maharashtra is about 1.7 lakh tonnes per year.

(b) The number of people employed in salt industry in the district of Thane is reported to be about 3000.

(c) No, sir. The policy of banning sale of non-iodised salt for edible purpose will **not render salt labourers jobless.**

(d) Yes, Sir. The salt labourers of Mira-Bhayander area in the district of Thane demonstrated opposing the nation wide ban on sale of non-iodised salt for edible purpose;

(e) Yes, Sir.

Recommendations of Abid Hussain Committee

1256. SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE:
SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the recommendation of the Abid Hussain Committee, the S.S.I. exemption limit was raised to rupees three crores some time last year end;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Hon'ble Prime Minister in one of his recent statements mentioned that the above limit will be reduced to rupees one crore;

(c) if so, is it not against the developmental aspects of S.S.I. Units, especially when the environmental regulations are strictly to be followed resulting in investment cost increase; and

(d) the action taken to restore the limit of rupees three crores?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Perhaps the intention of the question is to seek information on SSI investment ceiling and not on SSI exemption limit. Abid Hussain Committee had recommended raising investment limit for SSI to Rs. 3 crores; based upon which the investment ceiling for SSI was raised to Rs. 3 crores in December, 97.

(b) Hon'ble Prime Minister had announced in a seminar on 29.4.98 that the investment limit for small scale industries will be reduced from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore.

(c) No, Sir. The Industry Representatives have been pressing for lowering the investment limit for SSI from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore with the apprehension that major portion of institutional credit will be cornered by bigger small units. Pollution Control and Research and Development equipments are not included in the list of plant and machinery for the purpose of computing value of plant and machinery to determine whether the investment of a unit falls below the limit prescribed for small scale industry.

(d) The investment limit of Rs. 3 crores has not been changed so far. However, action to reduce the same from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore is being initiated.

प्रशुल्क आयोग

1257. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव:** क्या उद्योग मंत्री यह बताने की कपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने प्रशुल्क आयोग को वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के अन्तर्गत लाने के लिए कोई नीतिगत निर्णय लिया है; और